

REMARKS

Applicant is in receipt of the Office Action mailed February 17, 2003. Claims 1 – 36 were pending in the application. Applicant has amended claims 1, 6, 13, 18, 25, and 30. Claims 1 – 36 remain pending in the application.

The Examiner objected to the abstract of the disclosure because of undue length. Applicant has amended the abstract accordingly.

Claims 1 – 36 stood rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Knight et al. (USPN 6,314,460, hereinafter “Knight”) in view of Ito et al. (US 5,581,709, hereinafter “Ito”). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant’s amended claim 1 recites in pertinent part:

“wherein the system is comprised of at least one host adaptor, **at least one switch**, and at least one Input/Output (I/O) device, wherein a path in the system from one host adaptor to the I/O device includes as path components one host adaptor, one switch, one I/O device, **a first link between the host adaptor and the switch and a second link between the switch and the I/O-device,**”

The Examiner asserts that Knight teaches determining information relating to the links between the host adaptor and all devices connected to it, such as switches and I/O devices. However, Applicant can find no teaching or suggestion in Knight of “**at least one switch,**” or “**a first link between the host adaptor and the switch and a second link between the switch and the I/O-device,**” as recited in Applicant’s claim 1.

Furthermore, the Examiner asserts that Ito teaches that a switch may be disposed between a host adaptor and an I/O device, and that it would have been obvious to employ the switching technology as taught by Ito in order to use switches to enable communications between the host

adaptors and the I/O devices in the network.

However, Ito teaches various embodiments of a *bus bridge mechanism* (col. 1, lines 14 – 20) which permits “a CPU of each of a single or plural hosts to access an IO device connected to an IO bus in a single or plural shared IO devices *as if it were an IO device connected to the IO bus in the host.*” (col. 2, lines 54 – 58, emphasis added) In comparison, Applicant’s amended claim 1 recites “determining component information on host adaptor, switch, and I/O device components **in a network system.**” Applicant respectfully submits that it would not have been obvious to have combined Knight with Ito, since Ito teaches a bus bridge and not “a network system”, as recited in Applicant’s claim 1.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner’s additional assertion that it would have been obvious to combine Knight and Ito since “they are both directed to the problem of configuring a storage network” and that “the switching means taught by Ito would improve the flexibility of Knight because it would allow the discovery process taught by Knight to determine not only the connection information between the host adaptor and its I/O devices, but also to specifically discover and store connection information relating to the switches between said host adaptor and I/O devices, as provided by the teachings of Ito.” Applicant notes that combining Knight with Ito to “discover and store connection information relating to the switches” would defeat the intended purpose of making Ito’s switches transparent, “*as if it were an IO device connected to the IO bus in the host.*”

Accordingly, claim 1 is believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references. Claims 2 – 12 are dependent upon claim 1. As such, these claims are also believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references for at least the same reason.

Claims 13 and 25 recite features similar to claim 1. As such claims 15 and 22, along with their respective dependant claims are also believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references.

Furthermore, Applicant's claim 3 recites in pertinent part:

**“receiving a request from an application program for configuration information on at least one component in the system;
querying the configuration file to determine the requested configuration information; and
returning the requested configuration information to the application program.”**

Applicant can find no language in Knight or Ito, either separately or in combination, that teaches or suggests the above recited limitations of claim 3. In contrast, Knight teaches a storage network analyzer which is part of a distributed storage management program. The distributed storage management program comprises a central management portion and a separate agent in each of the host computer systems. The agents gather data and communicate with the manager, which collates the data from different agents to produce a coherent view of the network. (col. 3, lines 13 – 43) Accordingly, claim 3 is believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references for at least the above reason.

Claims 15 and 27 recite features similar to claim 3. As such these claims are also believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references.

In addition, Applicant's claim 5 recites the limitation **“wherein the component information includes a loop address of each I/O device connecting to a loop that also connects to the switch.”** Applicant can find no teaching or suggestion of this limitation in Knight or Ito, either separately or in combination. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's assertion that it would have been obvious that such initiator and destination port addresses may comprise loop addresses, as per the implementation details of the switch means. As described above, Knight does not teach a switch and Ito teaches a bus bridge mechanism.

Accordingly, claim 5 is believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references for at least the above reason. Claims 17 and 29 recite features similar to claim 5, and as such are also

believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references.

Applicant also asserts that numerous ones of the dependent claims recite further distinctions over the cited art. However, since the above claims have been shown to be patentably distinct, a further discussion of additional dependent claims is believed unnecessary at this time.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. If a phone interview would speed allowance of any pending claims, such is requested at the Examiner's convenience.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert & Goetzel, P.C.. Deposit Account No. 501505\5681-79900\BNK.

Respectfully submitted,



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